



VOLUNTEERS IN POLICE SERVICE

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Volunteers in Police Service (VIPS) assist citizens in supporting the efforts of their state and local law enforcement agencies to protect communities from crime and terrorism. VIPS is a locally driven Citizen Corps program that allows community members to offer their time and talents to their local law enforcement agency.

"...we should continue to strengthen partnerships between citizens and local law enforcement and work to engage more volunteers in public safety and emergency preparedness."

President George W. Bush, May 9, 2003

Since September 11, 2001, the demands on state and local law enforcement have increased dramatically. As a result, the already limited resources of these agencies are being stretched further than ever, at a time when the country needs every available officer out on the beat. In many jurisdictions around the country, citizens have offered their services to law enforcement agencies, freeing up sworn officers to spend more time patrolling the streets. Citizens' roles range from part-time occasional clerical tasks to full-time volunteer work. Volunteers can fill critical gaps in program support and enhance services, enabling law enforcement agencies to respond more effectively to enforcement and policing priorities.

Further, citizens have come to realize through innovations such as community-oriented policing, the Department of Justice's Weed and Seed initiative, Serious and Violent Offender Reentry Initiative, and similar partnerships between neighborhood residents and government, that the police cannot succeed against criminals without the active participation of community residents. Many VIPS volunteers find that they are less fearful of being victimized as they reclaim their communities from the criminal element.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) is managing and implementing the VIPS Program in partnership with and on behalf of the White House Office of the USA Freedom Corps and the U.S. Department of Justice. The program's ultimate goal is to enhance the capacity of state and local law enforcement to utilize volunteers.



Get A Plan — Get A Kit — Get Involved





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Volunteer Opportunities

Citizens like you support law enforcement and public safety efforts in a variety of important ways. Citizens employ their specialized skills to meet a particular community need, or by becoming public safety partners through their businesses or civic associations. The Tulsa Police Department seeks a variety of skills. When volunteers apply, they are screened and interviewed by the agency to determine their skills, talents and knowledge. The volunteer coordinator will then try to match those skills to an appropriate assignment. Here are some examples of the types of assignments citizens can take on to assist the police department.

Volunteers can:

- Read parking meters
- Assist in citizens police academies
- Assist in school-based programs such as DARE
- Enter data
- Assist crime analysts
- Assist in court
- Assist with after-school programs
- Assist with typing reports, filing, answering phones, and other office tasks
- Conduct research through department and regional computer programs
- Compile crime data for specific area problems
- Compile statistical data
- Assist front counter personnel by answering citizen inquiries, directing citizens to proper police unit, performing routine administrative tasks
- Provide support for traffic/crowd control
- Assist with special events
- Write citations for handicap parking violations
- Assist with crime prevention programs
- Staff a Department booth and distribute information on police services at community events
- Assist the telephone reporting unit in taking reports of minor and "no suspect" crimes (e.g., theft from auto)
- Become reserve or auxiliary officers